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FINANCIAL SERVICES

GOVERNMENT REFORM

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE,
[SENIOR HOUSE DEMOCRAT]



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3212

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Chairman Gregory Russ
New York City Housing Authority
250 Broadway
New York, NY
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Dear Chairman Russ,

I am writing to you on behalf of the 48 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Astoria Houses tenants living at 1-04 Astoria Blvd., who have been without cooking gas since September 23, 2020. I understand that the cooking gas was turned off as a result of a gas leak, which NYCHA has yet to fix. I am cognizant of the many obstacles facing NYCHA in its efforts to speedily restore gas service to the building; however, this situation is placing an undue burden on the residents.

I am told that in response to the gas shut-off, residents were issued hot plates so that they could continue to cook; however, residents tell me that these hot plates are insufficient for cooking daily meals, as only one pot or pan can fit on the hot plate at once. As such, I understand that it can take hours to cook a single meal, which is especially problematic for those residents with families and full-time jobs.

Although it has been several weeks since NYCHA first discovered the gas leak, residents of 1-04 Astoria Blvd. tell me that they have not received clear guidance as to when their gas service will be restored. During a time that is already rife with uncertainty, it is deeply concerning that NYCHA cannot provide more clarity for its residents.

On Thursday, October 15, I had a productive conversation with a member of your staff concerning the gas leak. I understand that NYCHA is handling this issue with utmost expediency, however, I also understand that there are bureaucratic hurdles that may delay the repairs. As such, I am happy to assist NYCHA in navigating these hurdles, and I encourage you to reach out to me or my office if you encounter difficulties with the Department of Buildings or ConEdison. It is my hope that we can work together to ensure that gas is restored as soon as possible. I would implore NYCHA to do everything in its power to ensure service restoration before the Thanksgiving holiday when many people will be unable to leave their homes due to the ongoing pandemic.

I am requesting that NYCHA release a clear timeline for the intended repairs, and that NYCHA continues to address the issue with the utmost urgency. I am also asking NYCHA to provide a more reasonable, long-term cooking solution while residents are without their stoves, such as a hot meal program. Lastly, I ask that NYCHA consider reducing rents for affected tenants until their gas is restored.

Please review the above concerns and advise me as to your response, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations. Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jessie Kay in my district office at (212) 869-0606.

Very truly yours,



CAROLYN B. MALONEY

Member of Congress